

Message Text

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70

ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 EUR-12 SCA-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 JUSE-00 SEC-01 PA-01 PRS-01

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R 091700Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4401

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN JOSE 3355

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CS

SUBJECT: VESCO ACCUSED OF ILLICIT POLITICAL CAMPAIGN
CONTRIBUTIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: OPPOSITION POLITICAL LEADER CHARGES
VESCO'S ILLEGAL INTROMISSION IN 1974 COSTA RICAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN;
HE CITES FIGUERES' RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT
THAT VESCO CONTRIBUTED TO ALL THE PARTIES. FIGUERES,
HOWEVER, SAYS THAT HIS VESCO/CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT
WAS MADE IN JEST. END SUMMARY.

2. DEFEATED OPPOSITION PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE (1974)
RODRIGO CARAZO SUBMITTED AN ACCUSATION JULY 5 BEFORE
COSTA RICA'S SUPREME ELCTORAL TRIBUNAL (TSE) AGAINST
ROBERT VESCO FOR POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN COSTA RICA
THROUGH CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS DURING THE 1974 PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION CAMPAIGN. CARAZO BASED HIS CHARGE ON RECENT
REVELATIONS BY EX-PRESIDENT JOSE FIGUERES IN EXCELSIOR OF
MEXICO, REPRODUCED IN LOCAL PRESS JUNE 24 AND 25,
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THAT "VESCO AND HIS PEOPLE, SINCE THEY DID NOT KNOW

THE COSTA RICAN ATMOSPHERE, GAVE MONEY TO ALL THE
POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE PAST CAMPAIGN, BECAUSE THEY
FELT IT WAS THE CORRECT THING TO DO..."

3. CARAZO ALSO CITES FIGUERES' WELL-KNOWN, PUBLICLY
DOCUMENTED VESCO TIES TO ATTEMPT TO PROVE THAT WHEN
FIGUERES SPEAKS OF VESCO'S ACTIVITIES, HE SPEAKS
AUTHORITATIVELY.

4. ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL IS NOW STUDYING MATTER.
CARAZO'S CHARGE IS VIOLATION OF COSTA RICAN ELECTORAL
LAW. HE ALSO CITES VESCO'S ALLEGED VIOLATION OF
CONSTITUTION: PROHIBITION OF PARTICIPATION BY FOREIGNERS
IN INTERNAL POLITICS. IF TSE FINDS IN FAVOR OF CARAZO,
CASE WILL GO TO PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.

5. SO FAR, SIX DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES, INCLUDING
THE COMMUNISTS, HAVE MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS INDIGNANTLY
DENYING FIGUERES' ALLEGATION THAT THEY WERE
BLESSED WITH VESCO MONEY.

6. JULY 9 PRESS REPORTS THAT FIGUERES HAS INFORMED
TSE THAT WHAT HE SAID TO MEXICO'S EXCELSIOR (PARA 2)
WAS A JOKE. FIGUERES' LETTER STATES, ACCORDING TO
LA REPUBLICA: "IT'S A DIALOGUE IN WHICH A LOT OF THINGS
WERE JOKED ABOUT."

7. COMMENT: FIGUERES' "JOKE" EXPLANATION IS TRUE TO
CHARACTER AND FIGUERES' LEGENDARY STYLE.
WITH IT, HE MAY JUST HAVE DISARMED THE
OPPOSITION- AS HE HAS DONE SO MUCH OVER HIS LONG
POLITICAL CAREER.
TODMAN

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